such as adequate force availability, weaponry, mobility, communications, and institutionalised mechanisms for sharing of intelligence and operational coordination, can be put in place in a planned manner. Action along these lines has been initiated by the various State Governments. The Ministry of Home Affairs is also following up with the State Governments, and is also providing assistance as required in terms of deployment of forces, helicopters for logistics support, etc.

Relief in loan to weavers

*133. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has formulated a plan to provide relief in loan to weavers;

(b) if so, the outlines of the plan;

(c) whether Government has made any assessment about the loans given to weavers; and

(d) if so, the average loan amount on weavers at national level in December, 2008 in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) and (b) A committee headed by Managing Director, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) was formed by this Ministry to look into the problems of high cost of working capital and choking of credit lines in the handloom sector. The committee prepared a Financial Package in this regard whose proposals *inter-alia* include Waiver of overdue interest and overdue loans of Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Societies as on 31st March, 2007. The proposal is under consideration of the Government.

(c) and (d) Handloom Sector comprises largely of household and non-household units, which fall mostly under the unorganized sector. Credit needs of large number of weavers are being met through NABARD's concessional re-finance, Commercial Banks and informal channels. On the basis of data available, the credit flow to Handloom Sector from Co-operative Banks and RRBs during 2007-08 for production purpose was Rs. 950 crores. The Handloom Sector provides livelihood to 65 lakh weavers and allied workers. Thus, the per capita credit availability is Rs. 1461/-.

Effect of shortage of AJTs on trainings

*134. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of insufficient number of Hawk Advanced Jet Trainers (AJTs), the Indian Air Force has decided to reduce by half the number of personnel who will train on these recently inducted aircrafts;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a good number of Hawks have been grounded for want of spares, maintenance or quality control issues etc.;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the corrective steps Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) While the planned strength of trainees to commence training on Hawk aircraft, has been modified for the course commencing from January, 2009, the total number of trainee pilots of the fighter stream being trained has been kept constant.

The review of training module is a continuous phenomenon keeping in view the training assets of the air force.

It is incorrect to say that a good number of Hawks have been grounded for want of spares and maintenance issues. The maintenance philosophy of the Indian Air Force addresses issues of serviceability, product support etc. Besides, a continuous and multifaceted effort is always underway in the Indian Air Force to enhance fleet availability. Constant interaction with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), both indigenous and foreign is also maintained to overcome the technical defects of aircraft.

BPL persons in the country

*135. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of 30 crore persons Below Poverty Line (BPL) in the country, about 22 crore, *i.e.* 73 per cent live in rural areas;

(b) whether Government has so far examined reasons for rural poverty;

(c) whether Government has set up any mechanism to verify the actual BPL list (State-wise); and

(d) the steps Government has taken so far to achieve "Millennium Development Goal of eardicating extreme hunger and poverty" under its various schemes like NREGA, IGNOAPS, SGSY etc. by 2015?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes Sir. According to poverty estimates of Planning Commission released for the year 2004-05 based on the Sample Survey Data on Household Consumer Expenditure (NSS 61st Round), 30.17 crore people were living below the poverty line out of which 22.09 crore (73.22%) were in rural areas.

(b) and (c) The Eleventh Five Year Plan Document analyses the reasons for rural poverty which includes unemployment and under-employment, lack of access to natural resources, over dependence on agriculture, besides chronic social factors. While the estimation of poverty in the Country is done by the Planning Commission, the Ministry of Rural Development provides financial and technical assistance to the States/UTs to conduct the Below Poverty Line (BPL) Census generally in the beginning of a Five Year Plan with the objective to identify the BPL